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Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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DRAFTED BY EUR/CE:RPORTER:EM
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EUR/PP:LFUERTH (IN DRAFT)
----------104966 130956Z /17
R 122240Z SEP 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BERN

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: SHUM, SZ

SUBJECT: 1978 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

1. PURSUANT TO PROSPECTIVE SUBMISSION BY THE DEPARTMENT TO THE CONGRESS OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES, EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO REASSESS LAST YEAR'S SUBMISSION, TEXT OF WHICH FOLLOWS.

2. THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS ARE REQUIRED BY THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT, ARE UNCLASSIFIED, AND SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH LAST YEAR'S CLASSIFIED COUNTRY EVALUATION PLANS.

3. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO CABLE RECOMMENDED CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO REPORT BY SEPTEMBER 20.

4. BEGIN TEXT "SWITZERLAND, A NEUTRAL AND DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, ATTACHES VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE OBSERVANCE AND
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MAINTENANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE SWISS CONFEDERATION HAS AN INTERNATIONALLY REKNOWNED HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. IT IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS GENEROUS ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES, AND IT IS THE HEADQUARTERS SITE FOR IMPORTANT WORLDWIDE ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, NOTABLY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO), THE UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC), AND THE INTERNATIONAL RED

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CROSS. THE SWISS GOVERNMENT RECENTLY PRESIDED OVER EFFORTS TO UPDATE THE GENEVA CONVENTION AT THE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON THE REAFFIRMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW APPLICABLE IN ARMED CONFLICTS.

1. RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE

FREEDOM FROM TORTURE IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

FREEDOM FROM CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

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JUDICIAL POWER IS EXERCISED BY THE LAW COURTS, THE INDEPENDENCE OF WHICH IS INSURED BY THE CONSTITUTION. TRIALS ARE FAIR AND PUBLIC.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME

FREEDOM FROM INVASION OF THE HOME IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

2. GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION

THE FAIRLY EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NATIONAL INCOME, AND THE SUBSTANTIAL SUMS SPENT ON WELFARE BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY IN THIS CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY EXPLAIN THE FACT THAT PUBLIC EXPENDITURES FOR SOCIAL PURPOSES ARE LOWER IN SWITZERLAND THAN IN MANY OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

5. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION, AND

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ASSEMBLY

SWITZERLAND IS A PARTY TO THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. SWITZERLAND PRIDES ITSELF ON BEING A COUNTRY OF ABSOLUTE RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE, AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS HAVE A RIGHT TO THE PROTECTION OF THE STATE AGAINST THE DOMINATION OF ANY OTHER RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. THERE ARE NO RESTRICTIONS OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION OR ASSOCIATION EXCEPT THOSE PLACED ON GROUPS CONSIDERED A POTENTIAL THREAT TO THE CONFEDERATION.

B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION

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THERE IS FREEDOM OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TRAVEL, AND OF EMIGRATION.

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

SWITZERLAND IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY. LEGISLATIVE POWER IS VESTED IN A BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE ELECTED BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. WOMEN WERE GRANTED THE FEDERAL FRANCHISE IN 1971, AND IN MOST CANTONS THEY ENJOY THE SAME VOTING PRIVILEGES AS MEN.

ALTHOUGH WOMEN WERE ENFRANCHISED ON THE FEDERAL LEVEL IN 1971, SWITZERLAND HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO RATIFY THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTION, BECAUSE WOMEN IN THE SMALL HALF-CANTON OF APPENZELL-INNERRHODEN, WHO COMPRISE 2 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL SWISS FEMALE POPULATION, HAVE NOT YET BEEN GRANTED FULL CITIZEN'S RIGHTS.

THERE IS FULL FREEDOM OF LABOR TO ORGANIZE.

6. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

THERE HAVE BEEN NO REQUESTS DURING THE POSTWAR PERIOD FOR OUTSIDE INVESTIGATIONS OF SWITZERLAND'S HUMAN RIGHTS."
END QUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780975/aaaacjxu.tel
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Message ID: 29e8df51-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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